¶ A briefe Catechiſme, conteining the moſt principall groundes of Religion.

Queſtion.

WHo created you, and all creatures?

Anſwere.

GOD.

Queſt. What is the duetie of you and all creatures vnto God?

An. To ſet forth his glorie.

Queſt. Howe is that done?

An. By keeping his worde and commaundement, whereby we declare that he is our ſoueraigne Lorde, and haue authoritie ouer vs to commaunde vs obedience.

Queſt. Howe doo the dumme creatures keepe Gods commaundement?

An. By continuing in that order and ſtate, whereto the Lorde by his worde firſt aſſigned them.

Queſt. Hathe man done ſo from the beginning?

An. No. For our firſte parents brake Gods commaundement in eating the forbidden fruite.

Queſt. What befell of that?

An. They became ſinfull, and haue left vnto vs being braſches of the ſame roote, the inheritance of ſinne, which wee call Originall ſinne, or ſinne which we haue by nature and kinde.

Queſt. What euil come thereof?

An. This Originall ſinne is a verie plague infecting all our deedes, ſo that they be all tranſgreſſions of Gods Lawe.

Queſt. What doth the Lawe of God require of vs?

An. That we ſhould loue the Lorde with all our harte, with all our ſoule, and ſtrength: and our neighbour as our ſelfe.

Queſt. Are wee not able to performe this?

An. No, In no wiſe.

Queſt. Why was it then commaunded of God?

An. Becauſe it is the rule of perfect righteouſnes, agreeing vnto the nature of God, able in it ſelfe to be obſerued and to giue life: but of vs vnable, becauſe of our ſinfull inabilitie.

Queſt. What profite receeyue wee then by it?

An. This, that we being conuict of our ſinne more manifeſtlie by the Lawe, wherein as in a glaſſe, we beholde the ſame, we might be aſhamed of our ſelues, and feare Gods wrath, and ſo be cõſtreyned to ſeeke for remedie of our miſerie otherwhere, namelie in Chriſt.

Queſt. You ſaye that in all our doynges wee tranſgreſſe Gods Lawe, what call you that tranſgreſsion?

An. Sinne.

Queſt. what is the deſert of ſinne?

An. Gods curſe and fierce wrath, to the vtter ſpoyling of ſoule and bodie by euerlaſting death, whoſe iuſtice thereupon calleth for the execution of this punishment.

Queſt. What foloweth thereon?

An. Then they whole eyes God doo open to ſee their miſerie, beholde them ſelues loſt, and confounded: yea euen plunged with the waues of woo vnto death. Then they repent and loth their former ſinne, which haue brought vpon them this condemnation, and humbly craue pardon, appealing from iuſtice to mercie. Then doo Chriſte Jeſus take them by the hande, giue them eaſe of their burthen, & quicken them by his comforting ſpirite, reſtoringe them from death to life. So are they then made newe borne children.

Queſt. By what meanes can Chriſt reſcue vs from his fathers iuſtice?

An. Becauſe he offered a ſacrifice of his owne bodie & blood to his Father, to make the attonement for vs. And he being perfect man, ſuffered death: and being perfect God, ſuſteyned him ſelfe to breake the bandes of death.

Queſt. And howe doo wee attaine to euerlaſting life, hauing eſcaped death?

An. Chriſt alſo hath fulfilled perfect righteouſnes, which he doeth impute to vs: and of the fulnes of the ſpirit whiche he haue receyued, he ſanctifieth vs, and ſo preſent vs to his Father, crauing that we may be partakers of his glorie with him.

Queſt. Howe dooe wee receyue and applye to vs Chriſt Jeſus, and all this which he haue done for vs?

An. By faith.

Queſt. What is Faith?

An. A ſpirituall gift giuen of GOD, euen the hand of our ſoule whiche wee reache out, to draw vnto vs, all good things which are offered and promiſed.

Queſt. Howe is this Faith wrought in vs?

An. By the inwarde meanes of the ſpirit, and the outward meanes of the hearing the worde taught.

Queſt. What outward meanes hath the Lord giuen for the ſtrengthning of our faith, that we may with more full aſſurance receyue his promiſes?

An. The two Sacramentes, Of Baptiſme, and the Lords ſupper, which we call ſeales vnto the confirming of the Lordes promiſe of our ſaluation.

Queſt. What is a Sacrament?

An. It is an outwarde viſible ſigne, by the confirmation of the worde applied thereto repreſenting ſpirituall graces vnto vs, for the teſtifying of Gods goodnes towardes vs, and confirming our Faith.

Queſt. What is Baptiſme?

An. The ſeale of our receyuing into Gods houſe, being before the heyres of hell: and this is done by a great alteration in vs, namelie, dying to ſinne, and liuing againe vnto righteouſnes, which is our newe birth. Which grace this Sacrament doo repreſent, both in that it ſignifie a ſpirituall waſhing from our ſinne by Chriſt his bloud: And alſo a drowning and paſſing through death, that we might eſcape a more grieuous death, and liue for euer.

Queſt. What doth the Lords Supper repreſent vnto vs?

An. Our continuall nouriſhing, after we bee receyued into Gods familie, with the liuing breade, and the liuing water, the bodie and bloud of Chriſt, whereon wee feede by faith, and growe together into one with him.

Queſt. What ſeale and marke can we finde in our ſelues that we haue this faith and be in Chriſte? For all can ſay, they beleeue.

An. The ſpirit which Chriſt Jeſus doo giue, as a pledge of our adoption, is a certayne ſeale. Whiche ſpirit if it dwell in vs, the fruite thereof, as the heate of a fornace, will breake foorth Loue to the Lorde and his worde will appeare, And charitie to our neighbour. Generallie a full alteration we muſt ſpie in our ſelues, that we are dead to ſinne, wherein we liued in times paſt, and nowe wee haue pleaſure to exerciſe our ſelues in meditating the Lawe of God, in Prayer, thankes giuing, and all the exercises of Chriſtianitie, wholie leading a newe life, and holding the agreement of godlie fellowſhip with the reſt of the members whereof Chriſt is the head. And alwayes hauing our converſation in heauenlie thinges, that our light maye ſhine, and our lyfe maye expreſſe the prayſe and glorie of him, and our thankefulnes towardes him, who haue redeemed vs vnto the hope of eternall life.

FINIS.